

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 761

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOGADISCIO 0582

COUNTRY TEAM MESSAGE

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJ: YOUTH PARA

REF: STATE 070302

1. SUMMARY: SOMALIA PLACES HIGH PREMIUM ON YOUTH TO EFFECT
REGIME'S REVOLUTIONARY GOALS. WE HAVE FEW RESOURCES OUTSIDE
SPORTS FIELD

TO KNOW, LET ALONE INFLUENCE, POTENTIAL LEADERS.
END SUMMARY.

2. ENVIRONMENT. SOMALIA NOW GOVERNED BY MILITARY REGIME
WHICH EXTREMELY SECURITY CONSCIOUS AND STILL HARBORS DEEP
SUSPICIONS THAT US IS HOSTILE TO REGIME. GSDR EFFECTIVELY
LIMITS OUR CONTACTS WITH GOVT OFFICIALS AND PRIVATE SOMALIS;
IT RESTRICTS OUR TRAVEL OUTSIDE MOGADISCIO.

3. RESOURCES. US HAS FEW ASSESTS IN SOMALIA. FINAL AID
PROJECT WINDING UP, AND WE HAVE LEGAL PROHIBITION AGAINST
NEW AID COMMITMENTS. PEACE CORPS DISCONTINUED HERE AT GSDR
REQUEST. DATT OFFICE CLOSED BY GSDR. USIS CONTINUES TO
OPERATE LIBRARY (PATRONIZED MAINLY BY STUDENTS) BUT OTHER
NORMAL USIS OPERATIONS CIRCUMSCRIBED. CU EXCHANGE PROGRAM
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DORMANT. HOWEVER, MAL WHITFIELD, REGIONAL YOUTH/ SPORTS OFFICER FOR AFRICA, OPERATES OUT OF MOGADISCIO AND CONTINUES HAVE VARIETY OF CONTACTS WITH LOCAL SPORTS OFFICIALS AND ATHLETES. MOREOVER, NEW BASKETBALL COACH FUNDED BY CU EXPECTED ARRIVE IN JULY TO BE ATTACHED TO MINISTRY OF SPORTS.

4. RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF YOUTH IN SOMALIA. THERE NO QUESTION THAT SOMALI GOVT LOOKS TO YOUTH TO FURNISH POLITICAL AND INSTITUTIONAL LEADERSHIP. REGIME HAS SET UP GUULWADAYAL, "RED GUARD" TYPE MASS YOUTH ORGANIZATION, WHICH HAS VAGUELY-DEFINED POWERS BUT BROAD RESPONSIBILITY FOR ENSURING THAT SOMALIA ATTAINS ITS REVOLUTIONARY GOALS. CONTROL OF THE MASS ORGANIZATION IS ENTRUSTED TO YOUTH DEPT OF PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICE WHICH IN TURN RESPONSIBLE TO PRESIDENCY (SEE MOGADISCIO 0319 AND 1105). NORTH KOREAN (ENTHUSIASTICALLY) AND SOVIETS (WITH SOME RESERVATIONS) ARE PROVIDING ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING TO PRO AND GUULWADAYAL. WITH FEW EXCEPTIONS, MEMBERS OF REGIME' S SUPREME REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL ARE YOUNG MILITARY OFFICERS UNDER AGE OF THIRTY- FIVE. WHILE REGIME PERFORCE HAS HAD TO UTILIZE EXPERIENCED CIVIL SERVANTS, IT HAS MADE NO BONES ABOUT WANTING TO REPLACE THEM WITH YOUNGER IDEOLOGUES. PRESIDENT SIAD RECENTLY CALLED FOR " REVOLUTIONARY YOUTH WHO BELIEVE IN THE VERITY OF SCIENTIFIC SOCIALISM TO EXPEDITE THE ATTAINMENT OF OUR REVOLUTIONARY GOALS." RECENT CABINET AND SUB-MINISTERIAL CHANGES (MOGADISCIO A-30) BROUGHT NEW MEN TO HIGH GOVT POSTS, MANY OF WHOM FRESH FROM SOVIET STUDIES.

5. PROGRAM AND OUTLOOK. IN PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES IN SOMALIA, WE MUST CONCENTRATE ON SPORTS WHICH IS ONLY YOUTH FIELD OPEN TO US. BURDEN OF THIS EFFORT FALLS ON REGIONAL YOUTH/ SPORTS OFFICER, WITH PAO AND EMBASSY COORDINATING CLOSELY. IN MEANTIME, WE TRY TO FOLLOW AND ASSESS HOST GOV' T PLANS, KEEP BIO FILES CURRENT, AND AWAIT TIME WHEN WE CAN BRING MORE RESOURCES TO BEAR ON A GOVT AND SOCIETY WHICH ARE IN RAPID CHANGE AND WHERE POSITIONS OF LEADERSHIP WILL INCREASINGLY PASS TO YOUNGER ELEMENTS NOW OUTSIDE ESTABLISHMENT. CROMWELL

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